

Election 2004 Fact Sheets



These fact sheets are designed to help you organize events in your community, and grill candidates on the campaign trail.

Join the debate.

Make your voice heard at an all-candidates meeting in your area.

Ask questions and press the candidates to make real promises.

Write a letter to your local newspaper outlining what you think should be on the election agenda.

Vote for the candidate you think best represents your interests and those of your community.

This election, vote to bring a government down to the people.



On June 28, vote for the **PUBLIC HEALTH CARE** you want!

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WHICH CANDIDATE WILL STAND UP FOR YOU?

Ask and find out!

“Private for-profit delivery of health care services could undermine public health care in Canada and open the door to American-style private medicine which denies millions affordable coverage and adequate care. Will you ban the practice of for-profit delivery of health care?”

WHAT DO CANADIANS THINK?

64% agree that the health care system should exclude for-profit corporations, and instead rely on not-for-profit health care providers (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

WHY IS PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SO IMPORTANT?

Public health care costs Canadians less than private health care and includes everyone. In Canada, total health care spending amounts to \$3,298 per person, whereas in the U.S. they spend the equivalent of more than \$7,000 per person. Every Canadian has health care coverage, while more than 45 million Americans do not. Public health care saves us money as taxpayers and individuals, while private “market solutions” inflate costs and reduce accessibility.

WHAT'S A P3 HOSPITAL?

A public-private partnership (P3) hospital is where a corporation owns the hospital building, employs the staff, and provides the non-clinical services, such as cleaning, food, and maintenance services. While P3 arrangements vary, they can allow corporations under contract with the government to plan, finance, build, and/or operate hospitals.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH A P3 HOSPITAL?

P3 hospitals can cost 10-15 per cent more than a public hospital. The corporations make their profit through cost-saving measures, which in Britain and Australia has included cuts in clinical budgets, questionable accounting, user fees, shoddy construction, and staff layoffs. Fewer staff, lower pay and no benefits lead to higher staff turnover and a poorer quality of service. A P3 hospital is an incremental form of privatization that can lead to the wider privatization of our public health care system through trade deals such as NAFTA and the General Agreement on Trade in Services.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH USING PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT CLINICS TO EASE THE PRESSURE ON THE PUBLIC SYSTEM?

For-profit clinics don't ease the pressure on the public system. Doctors who work in both public hospitals and their own private clinics tend to create longer waiting lists in public hospitals. Since public money is funding the private facilities, public resources are put into a private system that can allow people who have additional money to get faster service.

HOW WOULD THIS AFFECT ME?

With bit-by-bit privatization, a growing number of health services could become unaffordable to all except those who either have enough money or are willing to go into personal debt to pay for the service they require.

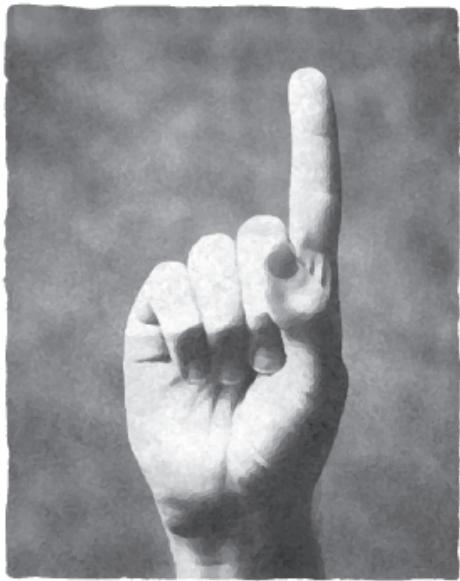
WHAT ARE SOME ALTERNATIVES?

A national pharmacare program would address rising drug costs through more efficient bulk purchasing. Government spending on hospitals and physician services has declined as a share of total health expenditures over the last decade, while spending on drugs has grown. Roy Romanow in his report on health care clearly rejected for-profit delivery in favour of a universal, public health care system. He stated that there is no basis for increasing for-profit health care delivery. In fact, he recommended the expansion and protection of the public health care system.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Go to The Council of Canadians' web site and read our voter's guide, download a poster for your front door, or participate in our on-line election discussion forum. On June 28, vote for the political party that you feel most reflects your values and the Canada you want.

www.canadians.org



On June 28, vote for the **SAFE FOOD** you want!

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WHICH CANDIDATE WILL STAND UP FOR YOU?

Ask and find out!

"Canadian wheat farmers face losing two-thirds of their wheat market if genetically engineered wheat is approved. Will you prohibit the introduction of GE wheat and other GE crops into Canada?"

"We need a sustainable agriculture policy, not a cheap food policy that offloads environmental, social and economic costs onto us, while agri-business sector profits. Will you work to ensure the survival of family farmers and curb the growth of factory farms?"

WHAT DO CANADIANS THINK?

83% agree that the Canadian government should put a moratorium on any further releases of genetically engineered crops until more health and environmental safety issues have been addressed (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

89% agree that the agriculture policies of federal and provincial governments should support family farms with environmentally friendly livestock production systems rather than large corporate farms (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SAFE FOOD?

When we talk about safe food we mean the impact genetic engineering and factory farming has on the quality of our food, our health, and the health of the environment. There is simply no long-term research to prove that genetically engineered food is safe to eat. Genetic engineering is a technology that involves the alteration of the genetic make-up of a plant or animal, usually by inserting genes from other species. Factory farming is an industrial style of livestock production using huge hog barns, giant feedlots, fish farms, and battery chicken operations.

WHY ARE FOOD LABELLING LAWS SO IMPORTANT?

Today, 7 out of 10 processed foods in our grocery stores contain GE ingredients. Although 35 countries have labelling laws to inform people whether their food contains genetically engineered ingredients, Canadians do not have the same protection. When you go grocery shopping it is impossible to tell the difference between GE-food and GE-free-food because the food industry and the government are opposed to a mandatory labelling policy.

WHAT'S ALL THE STINK ABOUT FACTORY FARMING?

Factory farming displaces family farmers, is dangerous to workers' health and safety, pollutes the air, water and soil, uses antibiotics and hormones to maximize production, treats animals inhumanely, brings intense conflict to rural communities, and produces lower quality food. Factory farming methods are implicated in the BSE crisis and the Avian flu outbreak. It is "cheap food" produced at great cost to our health and to the health of our democracy.

IF THIS IS ALL SO BAD, WHY HASN'T THE GOVERNMENT TAKEN ACTION?

Good question. In fact, provincial governments provide loans, equity investment, tax breaks, infrastructure, and a friendly regulatory regime. The federal Liberal government's new farm safety net program provides a disproportionate share of support to factory farms. All of this government backing takes away from support for family farms.

HOW WOULD THIS AFFECT ME?

Our health is at risk as more food becomes genetically engineered, as regulations on factory farms are weakened, and as livestock factories replace independent family farms. Factory farms produce lower quality meat, and pollute the water, air and soil.

WHAT ARE SOME ALTERNATIVES?

In the absence of mandatory labelling, the only way to avoid genetically engineered food is to eat organic. Ask if the meat or fish you buy is factory farmed. Seek out family farm producers, grocery stores and restaurants that supply organic, certified humane, natural, grass-fed or free-range meat.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Go to The Council of Canadians' web site and read our voter's guide, download a poster for your front door, or participate in our on-line election discussion forum. On June 28, vote for the political party that you feel most reflects your values and the Canada you want. Go to www.beyondfactoryfarming.org for more information.

www.canadians.org



On June 28, vote for the **CANADIAN SOVEREIGNTY** you want!

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WHICH CANDIDATE WILL STAND UP FOR YOU?

Ask and find out!

“Canada’s corporate elite is pushing an agenda of deep integration with the U.S. This agenda would harmonize our standards and regulations down to U.S. levels. It would remove the flexibility of the Canadian government to determine its own social, foreign, defence, environmental, agricultural, and cultural policies. Will you categorically reject the deep integration agenda now being pushed by the Canadian Council of Chief Executives?”

WHAT DO CANADIANS THINK?

91% agree that Canada should maintain the ability to set its own independent environmental health and safety standards and regulations, even if this might reduce cross-border trade opportunities with the United States (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

77% agree that Canada’s limited military spending should be used to enhance our abilities in peacekeeping and conflict resolution rather than trying to maintain multi-purpose forces intended for heavy combat alongside U.S. military forces (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

69% agree that Canada should not actively support the Bush administration’s missile defence system if it requires dedicating military spending to the program or allowing U.S. missile launchers in Canada (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

WHAT IS MEANT BY DEEP INTEGRATION?

Deep integration is a term that describes a broad policy initiative that would include a greater integration of the Canadian Armed Forces into U.S. military strategies; new security measures in Canada akin to those implemented by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; an iron-clad guarantee of an increasing supply of Canadian energy

resources to the United States; continental water and agriculture markets; and greater U.S. ownership of our telecommunications and media sectors.

DON'T WE NEED TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES?

Canadians want to work with Americans to promote a good trading relationship, security from terrorism, and a safe border. All of this can be done, however, without surrendering crucial aspects of our sovereignty, just as it would have been possible to create a trade agreement between our two countries that would have increased trading opportunities on both sides of the border, without giving away so many fundamental rights.

WHO IS PUSHING FOR DEEP INTEGRATION WITH THE U.S.?

The same groups that advanced the Canada-U.S. free trade agenda 20 years ago are now pushing for deep integration. The C.D. Howe Institute calls it a “Big Idea” and has released numerous papers on the issue. The Canadian Council of Chief Executives calls it the “North American Security and Prosperity Initiative” and has organized annual “visits” to Washington to lobby key decision makers on the issue.

HOW WOULD THIS AFFECT ME?

The same groups backing deep integration are on record calling for a for-profit replacement of medicare. The CCCE has stated that health care should be “run like a business” with “performance bonuses,” “corporate discipline” and “private sector innovation.”

WHAT ARE SOME ALTERNATIVES?

Deep integration with the United States is the wrong future for our country. It is crucial that the debate around deep integration not be limited to a small number of corporate lobby groups and decision-makers, but opened up to all sectors of Canadian society for input. What better way for Canadians to exercise their democratic rights than to demand public hearings, town hall meetings, or even a royal commission?

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www.canadians.org



On June 28, vote for the **PUBLIC SERVICES** you want!

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WHICH CANDIDATE WILL STAND UP FOR YOU?

Ask and find out!

"Public-private partnerships are a step-by-step form of privatization. Our public services need to be protected and enhanced, not chipped away at. Will you invest in our public services and prevent public-private partnerships?"

WHAT DO CANADIANS THINK?

84% agree that Canada's public services should be delivered by public sector workers accountable to elected representatives and the public, not by corporations accountable to shareholders (Ipsos-Reid, 2004). 75% agree that Canada should rebuild its public infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools, highways and water systems, through direct public involvement and not through public-private joint ventures with corporations (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

64% agree that Canada's health care system should exclude corporations that operate for profit, and instead rely solely on public and not-for-profit health care providers (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

WHY ARE PUBLIC SERVICES SO IMPORTANT?

Public services - such as health care, education and water - are a public trust. They are cost-efficient and accessible to everyone. At the turn of the twentieth century, there was no such thing as social security in Canada, and no recognition of social or health rights. These rights were won by citizens largely after World War II.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH PRIVATIZING THEM?

When a corporation runs a privatized public service they build in a 10-15 per cent profit margin. They make their profit through cost-saving measures, which can include user fees (which makes the service less accessible), staff layoffs (which leads to high staff turnover

and a poorer quality of service), and the cutting of corners. In that the government can borrow money at a lower interest rate, private sector financing arrangements end up costing the public more.

WHAT IS A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (P3)?

A public-private partnership is a "partnership" between the public and private sector to deliver a service traditionally provided by the public sector. It can include "contracting out" a public service to a corporation, and a "publicly administered service" that has components of private finance, private design, private building, private operation, and even private ownership.

HOW WOULD A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP LEAD TO THE PRIVATIZATION OF A PUBLIC SERVICE?

Once a public service is partly privatized, trade deals such as NAFTA and the General Agreement on Trade in Services can be used by corporations to force more privatization.

HOW WOULD THIS AFFECT ME?

We all depend on public services like health care, education and water. When we need them, we expect them to be there. Despite what is often said, once P3 contracts are signed, public officials have little or no control over these essential services. If a public service were privatized, it would most likely be less accessible to you (unless you were able to pay a user fee), you might experience a service of poorer quality, and your community would have less input into decision-making and less access to information about how critical community services were being run.

WHAT ARE SOME ALTERNATIVES?

Although some claim that public-private partnerships have "shared benefits" the reality is that P3s are a step-by-step form of privatization. Due to years of underfunding, our essential public services - health care, education and water - are in need of reinvestment. These services need government reinvestment, not corporate money.

WHAT CAN I DO?

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www.canadians.org



On June 28, vote for the **FAIR ECONOMY** you want!

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WHICH CANDIDATE WILL STAND UP FOR YOU?

Ask and find out!

"Unfair trade deals, tax cuts for the rich, and cuts to essential public services have hurt Canadians. Canada needs trade agreements that work for everyone, taxation policies that are equitable, and public services that are protected from privatization. Will you work for a fair economy?"

WHAT DO CANADIANS THINK?

60% agree that the Canadian government should not sign new trade deals that allow corporations to directly sue the Government of Canada if our public policies impair their ability to make profits (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

75% agree that Canada should rebuild its public infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools, highways and water systems, through direct public involvement and not through public-private joint ventures with corporations (Ipsos-Reid, 2004).

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE "STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT" OF OUR ECONOMY?

Structural adjustment is a term used to describe government actions such as: deep cuts to government spending, particularly on education, health and welfare; deregulated transportation, energy and telecommunications systems; reduced real wages and lower labour standards; export-oriented agriculture; and the dismantling of protections for domestic industries. Free trade deals like the North American Free Trade Agreement (negotiated by the Conservatives, ratified by the Liberals) have imposed "structural adjustment" on Canada of the kind the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have imposed on many Third World countries.

DON'T SPENDING, TAXES AND THE DEBT NEED TO BE CONTROLLED?

Government spending needs to be responsible and accountable, but the slashing of federal programs and cuts in corporate taxes has been irresponsible and damaging to the Canadian public. Both Liberal and Conservative governments have lowered corporate taxes and taxes on the rich. A recent Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development study confirms that Canada is now spending just 18.9 per cent of its GDP on social programs, 15 per cent less than a decade ago.

HOW HAS THIS AFFECTED ME?

Standard & Poor's, the world's foremost provider of independent credit ratings, said that Canada now provides fewer programs to its elderly and unemployed than the U.S. The agency went so far as to describe Canada's treatment of its vulnerable as "ugly." Moreover, since 1989 (the year Parliament unanimously voted to end child poverty by the close of the century) child poverty in Canada has actually risen to 15.6 per cent in 2001.

BUT HAVEN'T "STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT" AND "FREE TRADE" BEEN GOOD FOR JOB CREATION?

Between 1989 and 2002, half as many full-time jobs were created in Canada as during the previous 13 years. Significantly, the quality of jobs has also been declining. Between 1997 and 2002, the real median hourly wages of "blue collar" workers fell by as much as 11 per cent in some categories. And with the privatization of workplaces and the de-unionization of the workforce, more and more Canadians have become "precarious workers" - part-time or self-employed, with no security, pensions or benefits.

WHAT ARE SOME ALTERNATIVES?

The revenue that was lost due to tax breaks for corporations and the wealthy were a major contributor to Canada's debt. Studies have shown that declining government revenues in the 1970s and 1980s, and not increased spending, laid the foundation for the large accumulated deficits of the 1980s and 1990s.

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On June 28, vote for the CANADA you want!

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Canadians believe in clean water, safe food, public health, fair trade, and Canadian sovereignty. Yet, many of the political parties seeking their support in this federal election are not reflecting these widely held views. (For information on party positions, go to www.canadians.org.) In this federal election, press the candidates on the issues of concern to you. Let them know that you have public opinion on your side.

CLEAN WATER

97% agree the Canada should adopt a comprehensive national water policy that recognizes clean drinking water as a basic human right.

75% agree that Canada should rebuild its public infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools, highways and water systems, through direct public involvement and not through public-private joint ventures with corporations.

SAFE FOOD

89% agree that the agriculture policies of the federal and provincial governments should support family farms with environmentally friendly livestock production systems rather than large corporate farms.

83% agree that the Canadian government should put a moratorium on any further releases of genetically modified crops until more health and environmental safety issues have been addressed.

PUBLIC HEALTH

84% agree that Canada's public services should be delivered by public sector workers accountable to elected representatives and the public, not by corporations accountable to shareholders.

64% agree that Canada's health care system should exclude corporations that operate for profit, and instead rely solely on public and not-for-profit health care providers.

FAIR TRADE

62% agree that the Canadian government should not sign a new international trade agreement with the World Trade Organization that makes Canada's public services, such as health care and education, open to competition from foreign corporations.

60% agree that the Canadian government should not sign new trade deals that allow corporations to directly sue the Government of Canada if our public policies impair their ability to make profits.

CANADIAN SOVEREIGNTY

91% agree that Canada should maintain the ability to set its own independent environmental health and safety standards and regulations, even if this might reduce cross-border trade opportunities with the United States.

77% agree that Canada's limited military spending should be used to enhance our abilities in peacekeeping and conflict resolution rather than trying to maintain multi-purpose forces intended for heavy combat alongside U.S. military forces.

69% agree that Canada should not actively support the Bush administration's missile defence system if it requires dedicating military spending to the program or allowing U.S. missile launchers in Canada.

CULTURE

73% agree that owners of Canada's media have gone too far in trying to inject their own personal political opinions into what their media outlets say and what they report.

63% agree that the federal government should act to limit media concentration.

68% have an unfavourable opinion of foreign ownership in media companies.

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The foregoing are results of Ipsos-Reid polls conducted for The Council of Canadians, March 23-25 and March 30-April 1, 2004. The culture polls were conducted by Ipsos-Reid for the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, May 4-9, 2004.

www.canadians.org